

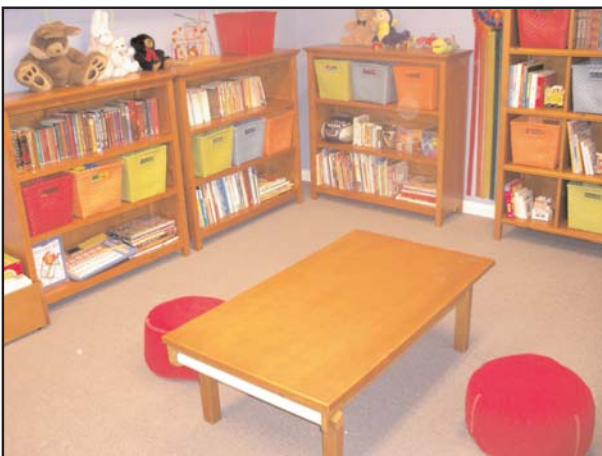
Fifteen-year-old gives the gift of literacy

This summer, Family Tree Women In Crisis shelter was given a gift, a gift of learning and literacy. Kent Denver School sophomore, Riley Carney, completed the huge task of furnishing, restocking and reorganizing the group room for the youth living at the domestic violence shelter. The group room, which is used for learning activities including education on anger management and domestic violence issues, was previously stocked with used toys and games and donated used furniture. Now the learning space is filled with new furniture, dozens of new books, bookshelves, bean bag chairs, educational toys and literacy games.

Riley describes her motivation for taking on such a project by explaining the importance of education and literacy in breaking the cycles of domestic violence and poverty. "I wanted to provide a safe and happy place for literacy and learning," says Riley, whose endeavor began approximately two years ago when she started dog-sitting for extra cash. She soon decided to start saving the money and, along with additional funds from babysitting and her weekly allowance, she was able to reach her goal of a literacy center at Women In Crisis.

"Riley has truly brought sunshine to the children in the shelter. It was phenomenal to see their faces light up with we opened the room for the first time. It is so nice to have a designated place for the children and me to work together," explains Siobhan Hastings, Women In Crisis Children's Advocate. Riley plans to keep giving, by donating her time as a volunteer at the shelter next year when she turns 16 years old.

Story submitted by Dana Juniel, Development Associate, Gifts & Community Support.



*Family Tree donor, **Riley Carney** relaxes on a bean bag after a hard days work of transforming the group room at Family Tree Women In Crisis shelter.*